

PBCDF resumes disposal operations

Courtesy of the Pine Bluff Chemical Disposal Facility Public Affairs Office

The Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (PBCDF) resumed rocket disposal operations May 14, following the completion of a planned maintenance outage for the enhancement of the pollution abatement system.

"We had safely eliminated a significant portion of our chemical weapons prior to our planned maintenance outage, and expect to be equally successful during this next phase of disposal operations," said Randy Long, PBCDF site project manager.

PBCDF has also begun eliminating its secondary waste in the metal parts furnace, and over the next few months will be preparing the metal parts furnace for agent trial burns. Secondary waste consists of materials used during the disposal process, such as protective gear worn by personnel and carbon filters. The agent trial burns are a series of tests that will evaluate the environmental performance of the furnace system.

"Our employees did an excellent job of safely completing this important outage on time. They are ready and excited to resume operations to reduce the chemical weapons stockpile at Pine Bluff," said David Reber, Washington Group International project general manager.

Prior to chemical weapons disposal operations the Pine Bluff Arsenal had safely stored 3,850 tons of chemical agent, 12 percent of the Army's original chemical weapons stockpile, for more than 60 years. The inventory includes nerve agent GB-filled rockets, nerve agent VX-filled rockets, nerve agent VX-filled landmines and blister agent HD/HT-filled bulk containers.